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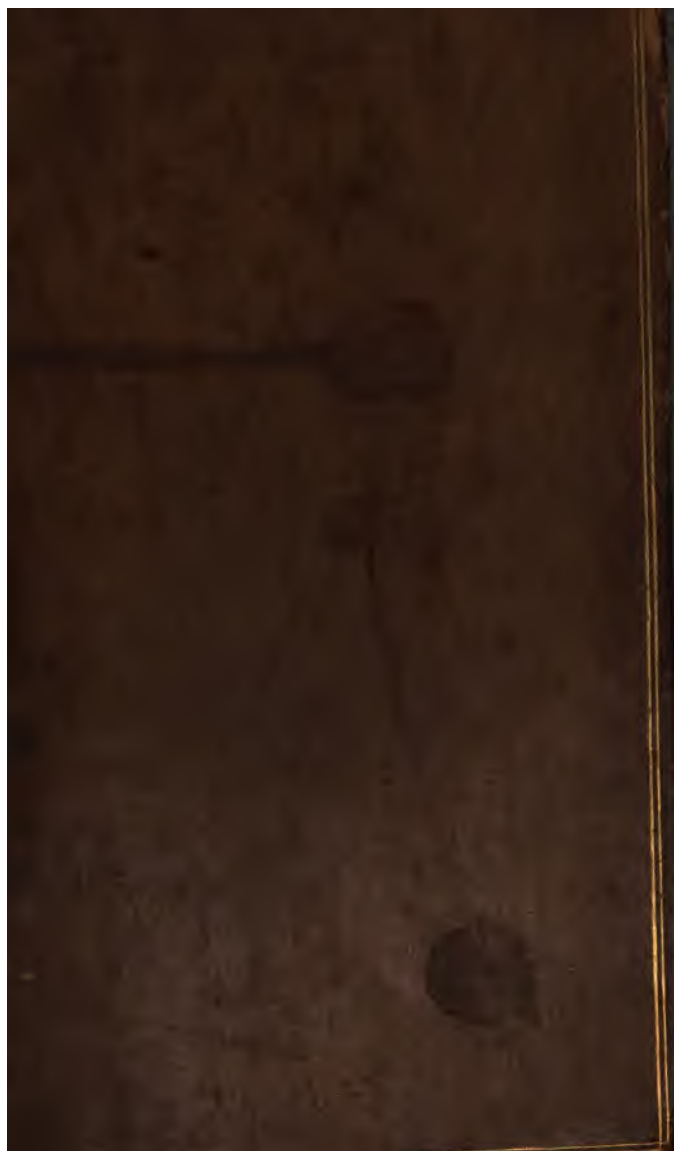
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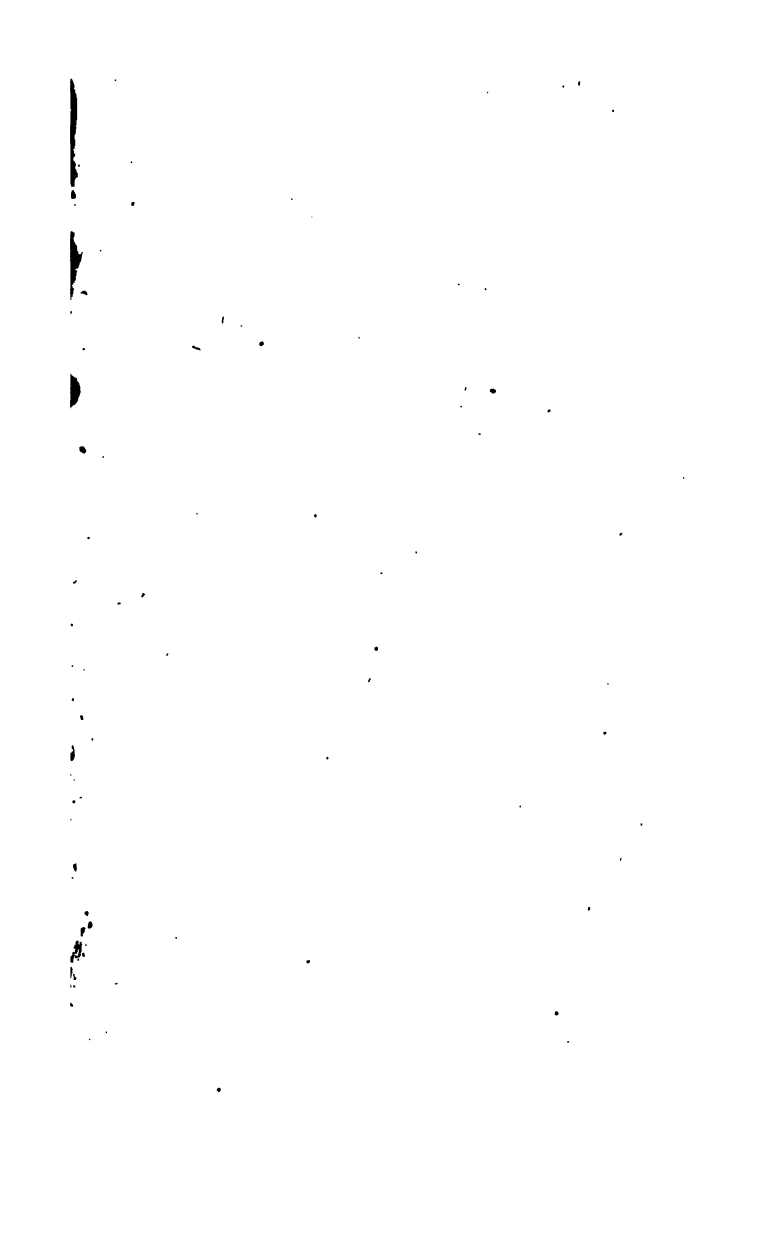
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THE
EFFUSIONS
OF
FRIENDSHIP
AND
FANCY.

Vol. I.

MEMORANDUM
TO
SIR
Y D X A E

*W. C. Camp. M.
1854.*

THE
EFFUSIONS
OF
FRIENDSHIP
AND
FANCY.

In several LETTERS to and from
SELECT FRIENDS.

The SECOND EDITION,
With large ADDITIONS and IMPROVEMENTS.

In TWO VOLUMES.
VOLUME I.

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LETTER I.

THE late amiable Mr. Shenstone used frequently to say, that *he was never more happy than when alone, except when he had his friends about him.* Those friends, you may suppose, were ready enough to congratulate him, on this twofold capacity of happiness, and on that felicity of temper which could receive pleasure from the different circumstances of solitude and society. “Mr. Shenstone,” would they say, “how peculiarly happy must you be!—when alone, you enjoy
“the most singular delight in indulging the
“pursuits of a refined and elegant imagination—you borrow the most enchanting
“pleasures from the beauties of Nature,
“and you repay her for those pleasures,
Vol. I. B “by

“ by drawing the happiest pictures of her
 “ works in their original simplicity.—
 “ You are her lover upon principles that
 “ do her the greatest honour, and you have
 “ therefore a right to every favour she can
 “ bestow.

“ WHEN you forsake the visionary enjoy-
 “ ments of solitude, and mix with society,
 “ you acknowledge your happiness to be
 “ greater than before :—when you have your
 “ friends about you, your enjoyments are
 “ complete.—How much are you to be en-
 “ vied ! since in these circumstances you
 “ must always be happy ; for it is, surely,
 “ impossible for any man to converse with
 “ Mr. Shenstone without being or becoming
 “ his friend.”

“ No,” he would reply, “ your
 “ compliments and your conclusions are
 “ equally

“ equally too great.—Could I make
 “ friends of all that have my kind wishes,
 “ or benevolent inclinations, I should have
 “ none about me who might not honour me
 “ with that title. But I meet with numbers
 “ who are alike incapable of being my
 “ Friends and of giving me pleasure.—It is
 “ the misfortune of those whose minds have
 “ any peculiar turn, to meet with few who
 “ can afford them entertainment in society;
 “ and it is particularly unfortunate for men
 “ of abstracted pursuits, that they can rarely
 “ meet with a congeniality either of senti-
 “ ment or temper.—There are, indeed, some
 “ few whom I properly call my Friends, and
 “ in whose company I cannot but be more
 “ happy than in any solitary indulgences of
 “ imagination : but, how seldom is it that
 “ you will allow me these extraordinary en-
 “ joyments!—you, though my Friends, I
 “ must accuse of being like the rest of the

“ world, and must say, so seldom do I see
 “ you, that you will not suffer much to
 “ make any man happy.”

WHAT think you of a man of such a
 mind, and such a turn of conversation?——
 You will think aright, if you conclude that he
 deserved much happiness, and enjoyed little.

LET-

L E T T E R II.

NAME it not, my friend ! Tell me no more of the power of Reason to wean the heart from long attachments ! I know how impotent, how very ineffectual the application.—Whatever the imagination has long embraced, it will not let go its hold of that, unless it grasp at some other object of a similar nature.

IN vain, therefore, will you endeavour to cure your patient of his present malady by any moral or philosophical regimen—in vain will you lay before him precepts of fortitude and patience.—It is not his reason to which you are to apply. The disorder lies in his imagination, and it is upon that only that you can work with success.

HE has lost the partner of his affections : that misfortune is, indeed, one of the greatest within the province of human calamity—when an object which the heart has long embraced is torn from it, the chasm which it leaves behind must be filled with horror. Tell him not how or what to think upon such an occasion—the thoughts are under no command, when the heart is not at rest.

BE it your study rather to amuse his imagination than to discipline his mind. Endeavour to draw it off to congenial ideas of equal tenderness, but less distress.—Paint similar circumstances of misfortune, but dash the ground with hope, and with all those little complacencies and consolations, which the mind, even under the greatest afflictions, not unwillingly derives from self-flattery.

SOMETIMES

SOMETIMES remind your suffering friend of those kind and tender attentions he shewed to that beloved partner he has lost, when living. He will feel from thence, in some measure, the regret of departed pleasures; but he will likewise obtain what is more than equivalent, and what, indeed, is the best of all consolations, the delightful reflection of having done his duty; of having behaved with that tenderness, honour, and fidelity which were due to the more dependent associate of his life and fortunes.—Such reflections will infallibly bring with them that complacency, to which the heart, always ready to court its own approbation, will give an easy admittance; and the tears which, possibly, he may shed over such remembrances, will not be tears of misery.

THERE are no connections in human life so invariably serene, that they do not some-

times languish under the shadow of discontent—little competitions and casual uneasiness will dash the purest cup of love—but name not these ; nor ever make use of them as any argument of consolation. When we lament the loss of great happiness, we find little satisfaction in being exempt from those slight disturbances that might attend it ; and a generous mind would suffer the greatest pain in the recollection of having occasioned some part of such uneasiness.—Should you ever perceive your friend under a distress of this kind, (for I apprehend that even he may reflect on some things which he would blame) charge him with the vanity of being thought more than a man. Tell him that to repine at accidental frailties, is to repine that he was not born in some order of superior beings.

If he is inclined to solitude and private reflection, indulge him even with that ; but
let

let not such recesses be either frequent or long. The mind, during short intervals of lonely thought, endeavours to rectify and recollect itself; while long indulgences of that kind, under the influence of sorrow, will reduce that sorrow to a habit.

BUT still remember that your principal care and address must be employed upon the imagination. If you can obtain an influence over that, your point is carried.—In order to pay your court to it in the most effectual manner, you must make many concessions, and appear to soothe and indulge it upon its favourite subject, even while you are artfully drawing it off to the pursuit of others.

THE transition from gloomy and melancholy ideas to happier and more serene attentions cannot suddenly be effected;—the maladies of the mind, like those of the body,
must

must be removed gradually; but in the former, as well as in the latter, it is in the power of art to be of much service—you will shew yours in accelerating the progress of your friend from great affliction, to a state of contentment. You will shew your skill no less than your friendship, in drawing him by imperceptible means, from painful and distressing reflections to the softer shades of sorrow; from thence to the evenness of placid resignation; and forward to the mild dawnings of hope.

YOUR office is the noblest, the most delightful that honours the province of human virtue. To communicate happiness is worthy the ambition of beings superior to man; for it is the first principle of action with the Author of all existence.—It was GOD that taught it as a virtue—it is God that gives the example.

LET-

L E T T E R III.

IT is true, I did expect to find some sincerity amongst men of cultivated minds.— I should have thought that the embellishments of taste, and of the more humanizing philosophy, would at least have inspired a love of truth and honour ; and that the contemplation of what was beautiful in the works of art and nature, might naturally have inspired a regard for the moral beauty.

BUT this, I find, is not the case, where there is the least opportunity of being corrupted by the commerce of public life. With the loss of that simplicity of heart and manners which can never live in the air of a court, the attachment to truth, and the love of sincerity insensibly vanish.

THOER

THOSE who are habitually accustomed to withhold the heart, and to mask the mind (which is even necessary for such as mingle with the world) by degrees lose the very idea of sincerity, and their conduct, as well as sentiments, becomes entirely artificial.

Is it then to be wondered at, that fraud and treachery, and deceit and dissimulation, are so frequently to be found in the higher ranks of life? Are not these the very natural consequence of their manners? Those who look for honesty or sincerity amongst the great, if they should, as infallibly they must, be disappointed, ought by no means to blame those by whom they were deceived.—The cause of their disappointment lay in their own ignorance.—They ought to have acquainted themselves, that truth never existed within the precincts of a court, and that it was morally impossible for any man who had
long

long and necessarily been accustomed to insincerity, to have the least regard for his promise.

WE ought entirely to be reconciled to impossibilities. It would be superfluous to complain that we were deceived by the professions of any great man, at the same time that it would argue the most absolute ignorance of the world.—It would be superfluous to complain, and it would be absurd to reproach him. Insincerity is his fort, the asylum in which he finds a refuge from a thousand inconveniencies.

NAY, so necessary is this, that truth itself would, in such a man, be a weakness. It would be as useless to him as Saul's armour to David; and it would, therefore, be the last degree of folly for him to take the trouble of such a load. The armour of deceit,

ceit, though not always impenetrable, is light and convenient; and, thence arises the wisdom of wearing it.

FROM henceforth, let no man expect any thing but dissimulation within the province of the Great, and none will ever have the mortification to be disappointed.

LET-

L E T T E R IV.

O NATURE! grateful for the gifts of mind,
 Duteous I bend before thy holy shrine :
 To other hands be Fortune's goods assign'd,
 And thou, more bounteous, only grant me thine.

Bring gentlest Love, bring Fancy to my breast ;
 And if wild Genius, in his devious way,
 Would sometimes deign to be my evening guest,
 Or near my lone shed not unkindly stray ;

I ask no more ; for happier gifts than these,
 The sufferer, man, was never born to prove.
 But may my soul eternal slumbers seize,
 If lost to Genius, Fancy, and to Love !

Such, my friend, were the verses you alluded
 to, but which at that time I was unable to
 recollect. You had some shadow of objection
 to the sentiment in the last stanza, and I
 suppose you concluded that life might still

have something in it worth the living for, though destitute of every circumstance in the last-quoted verse.—Doubtless there are numbers for whom it might have attractions entirely exclusive of these; but you will consider that those verses were not intended as an universal prayer, being calculated merely for private devotion.

EVERY man has his peculiar sources of enjoyment, and my opinion here goes no farther, than that when those sources are exhausted or lost, life is a tenement that is no longer worth occupying. What pleasure can there be in cultivating a field which will never produce those fruits that alone would reward the pains of the tiller? What can be the consequence but to load the barren soil with curses, and to repine at the waste of wearisome labours? For, such is the condition of life, that we must be at some care

and pains, even to live ; and when those cares are softened by nothing that is delightful, nothing that is agreeable, it becomes a very wretched appointment, a farm for which the tenant pays a heavy rent and starves.

FOR my own part, I would never wish to survive either the means, or the capacities of enjoyment. It is certainly the most abject state of mind, and argues the most deplorable fear of death, to wish either a painful or a joyless existence prolonged ! Yet, what numbers are liable to these imputations ! What absurd desires do we find for the continuance of insipidity and even of misery ! Groveling, low-thoughted creatures, what is it that ye fear ? Ye load with curses the barren soil ye occupy, but ye dread to be dispossessed. Ye would rather become hewers of wood, and drawers of water, than receive a warning to

leave the wretched premises——well are ye worthy of the miseries ye hold so fast.

WOULD you scruple, my Friend, to join in this apostrophe? If not——would you not blush to be afraid of Death when you meet him? Pardon me! I hope you will never be in such circumstances as shall make you wish for him, and I am convinced that in no circumstances you will be afraid to meet him.

LET-

LETTER V.

I KNOW of no reason for the common observation, that a man's wisdom can only be known from the will that he makes, except this, that men, in general, act more foolishly in that than in any other circumstance of their lives.

BUT when our old acquaintance applied that axiom to himself, with what propriety might we have observed, that though a man's wisdom should not appear before his will, his virtue could not appear after it!—If virtue be, as it certainly is, the best and most essential part of wisdom, being the means of that happiness which wisdom proposes as its end, then how idly founded is the current observation!

You shall permit me to give you some account of a character which will directly prove its fallacy ; a character in all respects the reverse of our old acquaintance !

A BENEVOLENT old man, without the least tincture of selfishness, is, you must own, an extraordinary person, but a benevolent old bachelor is a phenomenon which may justly excite our wonder.—The natural peevishness of age in a man who has survived the capacities of pleasure, and the selfish turn of temper which generally takes place in that period, frequently mark the characters of those who have been softened by domestic endearments and alliances ; but amongst those who have had no such humanizing connections, who have passed through life in joyless and solitary celibacy, it is almost wonderful to find any traces of humanity.—Nevertheless, my benevolent old man is humanity itself.

self. Two thirds, at least, of his fortune, which is rather competent than ample, he has divided amongst his relations, and is so far from expecting any extraordinary deference on that account, that he will not even be treated with the respect due to a father. To see them happy is the only view, the only desire he appears to have; nor will he suffer the least restraining sense of obligation to sit on their countenances a moment. He will not suffer that ease, that freedom and independency which they derive from his beneficence, to labour under the weight of their own gratitude.

BUT it is not merely to his own relations that his kindness is thus extended.—My benevolent old man is a parent to all.—His charity runs so deep and silent that it is scarce possible to discover it.—He is unaffectedly strict in his injunctions of secrecy to those he

relieves, but it is easy to perceive in the countenances of the poor that are around him, the anxious respectfulness of silent gratitude.

If you have the good fortune, and THE HONOUR to be in his company, you must observe that he derives his whole pleasure apparently from yours ; his spirits seem to move in sympathy with your own, and he is happy in proportion as he believes you to be so.

WHAT an amiable, what an excellent creature ! How much superior to heroes and princes is THE MAN OF ASHFORD !

L. E. T.

LETTER VI.

BLAME not these idle dreams, my friend!—Were it not for these, life would stagnate.—Speculation is to the mind, what exercise is to the body; it preserves the intellectual faculties in an active and vigorous state, and prevents that languor and heaviness of apprehension, which are almost always the consequence of an entire relaxation of thought.

It is for this reason, that when I have nothing more necessary to attend to, (which, indeed, is often the case, as a man without connections has but few cares) I give my mind an airing in the regions of visionary existence.

THERE is one agreeable circumstance attending these worlds of our own making, which is, that we can make them after our own hearts. Whatever mode of life we conceive to be most productive of happiness, that we naturally introduce into our Arcadian dominions, and banish from thence every passion or pursuit to which we have a natural or moral aversion.

IT is some consolation, in a state of being which is exposed to many evils, to contemplate more happy and more perfect conditions of existence. While the eye is attentive to these, it is drawn off from disagreeable objects; and thus, at least, a negative happiness is obtained by the deception.

FOR this, and for other reasons of the same kind, I have been always pleased with the poetical invention of *the golden age*. When

we

we are presented with delightful pictures of life, the casual regret which comparison may occasion, is by no means to be weighed against the pleasure we derive from beholding even the possibility of human happiness.—From scenes of virtuous simplicity and innocent enjoyment, we borrow the most flattering satisfaction ;—we see at once the dignity and the felicity of human nature ; and for a while forget what we are liable to suffer, by thinking of what we have a capacity to enjoy.

THESE representations of past happiness have likewise another advantage, which recommends them to us not a little.—The persons that enjoyed that happiness are no more ; and are, consequently, no objects either of our jealousy or envy. Were there any people now upon earth, who, from the bounty of nature, should possess such superior
pri-

privileges, the pleasure with which we might behold them would hardly be unenvious.

I SHALL take the liberty to mention one reflection more, which occurs to me upon this occasion ; because I know it will not be disagreeable to that moral, or rather religious habit of mind, which carries its influence through your whole life.

MAN, in every country, and in every period of time, of which we have obtained the least information, has always had a natural idea of a more perfect state of happiness than he enjoyed.—Will Nature deceive her children ? we have no reason to think so.

L E T-

L E T T E R VII.

HOW happy, my dear friend, are those minds, which get wisdom as it were by intuition ! While some are slowly purchasing it at the dear mart of experience, and paying a high price for those circumstances of knowledge, which they may never after have the least occasion for, others seem rather to possess it from instinct, than to acquire it from experience, and to set out upon the journey of life, supplied by Nature with a chart of the way they should travel, and perfectly guarded against every danger.

THE lot of these is, indeed, in many respects, to be envied ; for it is a miserable thing to be for ever purchasing, at the expence of pain and inconvenience, that wisdom which should serve for the various purposes

poses of life. The prudential knowledge we may have acquired from the experience of one year may be very inadequate to the exigencies of another, and so various are the occurrences of the little existence through which we pass, that if we have no other source of useful and necessary knowledge than in our own practice, we may be for ever learning what we have always occasion to know,

THERE is another source, and that is observation; but this is not accessible to all. Those who pass through the less-frequented walks of life behold but few events, and have but little opportunity of tracing effects to their causes, and, consequently, of learning, from speculation, in causes to behold their effects.

THE principles of reason in such people direct them to little more than the distinctions
of

of right and wrong. Unpractised in the school of human kind, they act under the first influences of natural sentiments, and are utter strangers to all those manœuvres of address, and unintentional appearances that take place in the habits of artificial life.—Should their ill-fortune, therefore, lead them into such a region, they would be eternally liable to mortifications, impositions, and disappointments.—The business of life would be to learn again, and they would be once more reduced to the state of childhood.

Is it possible that your sequestered friend should, at this time of life, think of mingling with the busy world?—Your truly pastoral friend, than whom no antediluvian could be more a stranger to the present state of men! For heaven's sake awake him from his dream. Tell him that the golden age is past—that vanity, subtlety, sophistry and design run
through

through the whole commerce of the *men* of
the world, and that he will meet with no
human creature in the public sphere of life
that will love him half so well as his dog,

LET-

LETTER VIII.

I AM much obliged to you for the fantastic, but beautiful present you sent me.—Yet the *Lusus Naturæ* are not, methinks, so uncommon as you represent them, nor are they confined either to what we call the animal, or the vegetable creation.—The moral, or if it will gratify you more, the rational world is full of them. Nature seems to amuse herself with making odd creatures of every species, and not less particularly of the human. For to what can we ascribe the strange qualities and dispositions of some men, but to the *Lusus Naturæ*?

WHAT is the fop, whose passions center in lace and feathers, but a *Lusus Naturæ*? What is the self-valued philosopher, who re-

tires to a cell in hopes of being distinguished but a *Lusus Naturæ*? The cynic who looks at society, and the coxcomb who figures it, what are they, but *Lusus Naturæ*? The grave scientific fool, who, on the score of no-learning, despises all that breathe not a demic air, is a *Lusus Naturæ*. The mystic and the metaphysical divine; the *Hutchinsonian*, the sage *Hutchinsonian*, with his hash-cherub, composed of beef and poultry and vegetation, which he calls a symbol of three gods; the methodist distributing damnation from his stool in Moorfields, and the cit's conscious wife quinking before his throne; all these are *Lusus Naturæ*. But the procession ends not here. The religious chymist, who toils in the search of occult qualities, has his counterparts in the chymical critic, the chymical politician, and the chymical philosopher: all the sons of system and conjecture (and numerous is the family) are *Lusus Naturæ*. The whole race

race of vanity and affectation, the prudish maid and the painted matron, the masculine nymph and the effeminate swain, are the genuine *Lusus Naturæ*. In short, whatever character is out of the bounds of reason or propriety, to me it appears a *Lusus Naturæ*.

L E T T E R IX.

O PEN your heart, and make room for mankind. What are modes of faith, or ceremonies of worship, to the obligations of society? What is it to a man's social character whether he eats fish or flesh on certain days, or whether he believes in legends, or laughs at them? Ninety-nine out of a hundred follow the religion of their fathers, without ever enquiring into the merits, either of different professions or of their own; and I am not about to pay you so great a compliment as to suppose that, if you had been born of popish parents, you would now have been a protestant.

I *am* angry with you; for, why did you look with less charity on Mr. **, who accompanied me in my last visit, than that gentleman

man deserved? But I will punish you for this foible.——I will come and fill your house with heresy and schism. I intend to bring two papists, a moravian, a methodist, a dipper, and a free-thinker with me; and to convince you that I am in earnest, you shall have a list of my company.

THE two papists are *Virgil* and *Tibullus*. The first is a strenuous advocate for purgatory, as appears from the following passage in his writings.

Quin et supremo cum lumine vita reliquit;
Non tamen omne malum miseris, nec funditus
omnes

Corporeæ excedunt pestes, penitusque necesse est
Multa diu concreta modis inolescere miris.
Ergo exercentur pœnis, veterumq; malorum
Supplicia expendant——

THE second, *Tibullus*, has written in defence of image-worship, and the doctrine of

merits. Thus clearly he expresses himself on these points.

Nec spes destituat —————

Nam veneror, seu stipes habet desertus in agris,
Seu vetus in trivio florida ferta lapis.

SUCH are my papists—and now for the moravian, whose name is *Catullus*. You have read *Rimius*, and are acquainted with the amorous doctrines of that sect. Exactly of a piece with those are the following verses of this *Catullus*. They are addressed to a *sister of love*, and, for the benefit of Mrs. ****, I have translated them from the Latin.

Lesbia, live to love and pleasure,
Careless what the grave may say.

When each moment is a treasure,
Why should lovers lose a day?

Setting sun's shall rise in glory,
But when little life is o'er,
There's an end of all the story :
We shall sleep; and wake no more.

Give me then a thousand kisses, &c.

THE

THE name of the methodist I shall bring with me, is *Plato*, and his discourse turns chiefly on reveries and raptures, and lights and visions.

My dipper is a fine old Grecian, called *Anacreon*, but such a bigot is he to the persuasion of dipping that he is eternally talking about it.

Come fill, my girls, fill high the Bowl,
And let me *drench* my fev'rish soul.
Fill the bowl, boy, fill it high,
Let me *flood* my soul with joy.

Add son.

THE free-thinker is *Lucretius*, a very noisy, sophistical fellow, so you are likely to have a blessed time of it.

L E T T E R X.

A P P R O V E ! I admire your generosity to the unhappy Frenchman. Are we not citizens of the world ? Are we not all fellow subjects of the universal monarch ? Is not the universe our home ? And is not every man a brother ? Poor and illiberal is that charity which is confined to any particular nation or society. I own, I never see any of those poor fellows, who are kept here as prisoners of war, without real concern—more, I think, than I should feel either for myself or for my countrymen, were an equal number of us to be in their circumstances, strangers and prisoners. What I am going to tell you will give you an odd idea of me, and may possibly excite your laughter ; but I will acknowledge, nevertheless, that not the most affecting or interesting events of history ever
 moved

moved me so much as the following simple story, which I read in a news-paper, viz. that a poor French prisoner, who had agreed with the master of a vessel to work, during his passage, for so much a day, was by that master refused his wages when he came on shore. What a roar of ridicule would this raise in the *laudable* society of Antigallicans ! The president would pronounce me frenchified, and Dr. F*** would preach a sermon to prove it ! Sure I am, however, that these sensations are right, because they are natural. Were we not to feel for *the stranger*, and him *that hath no helper*, should we not rank with the village curs, that all join to worry a four-legged stranger, merely because he is a stranger, and has four legs ?

I WILL not attempt to account for those compassionate sentiments we feel for distress, or that indignation which is excited by the :

appearance of oppression; but I will maintain that they are the distinguishing honour of human nature; and what philosopher will be such an enemy to society as to assert the contrary?

PERHAPS there is no nation upon earth more distinguished for charity than our own; but I am sorry to observe, that our charity is too limited, too partial. We can comprehend cities and towns, and sects and societies, in our scheme of benevolence, but we cannot comprehend mankind. *Hospitibus feri* we have been, and we are. The charity of an Englishman is bounded, like his country, by St. George's channel, the ocean, and the Tweed. If an Irishman visit us, he is a sharper of some denomination, beyond a doubt. If a Scotchman distinguisheth himself among us, he has fled from poverty, disease and dirt, to the elegance and plenty of Old England.

England. If a Frenchman comes over, he was weary of soup meagre, and his only errand was to devour our roast-beef. Nay, I remember a pamphlet intitled, “ Seasonable
 “ reflections on the importance of the name
 “ of England,” and written, if I mistake not, by the above-mentioned Dr. F* * *. However, let us flatter ourselves that these foibles proceed from the excess of a virtue, and are derived in general from an enthusiastic love of our country. But let us, my friend, make our patriotism like our religion, rational ; nor ever let our hearts be so overstocked with the love of one nation, as to shut out the rest of mankind from our benevolence.

•
 L E T.

LETTER XI.

THERE is a happiness in being a fool, if a man is insensible of his folly, but to be a fool and to know it, is miserable indeed.—To have just so much light stream through a chink of the soul, as is sufficient to discover the darkness and emptiness of the whole mansion, must be dreadful. How strangely would a man be startled, were he directed by such a ray of light to a full view of his mind ! I believe there are very few who could behold the scene without dissatisfaction : Yet, it were to be wished that we could extend the philosophy of optics so far as to procure a *microscope for the mind*; but I would have the use of it lie under these restrictions. In the first place, no fool, reputedly such, should be permitted to apply it,

it, any more than a sword should be put into the hand of a madman; for the sight might make him miserable, but it would not make him wise. In the next place, I would have it so constructed that it could not be applied to the breast of another, for that would break in pieces the whole chain of society. Husbands and wives, parents and children, brothers and sisters, would, in many a family, be at open war. PEACE would entirely desert the court, and she would scarce find refuge in the hamlet: The competitors for wealth and power would be shocked with the execrable wishes and designs of each other; and the hard-handed peasant would behold his neighbour thirsting for his funeral, and his farm. Nevertheless, there are two characters to whom I would have it applied, viz. the fanatic and the sycophant, and at the same time I would have them sensible of its application. Such ridiculous

culous circumstances would be the most adequate punishment imaginable.

I own there are a few more characters, to which, out of mere curiosity, I could wish to apply the mental microscope. Among the first of these I would chuse a miser for my speculation; for though it may be easy to guess at the general furniture of his mind, yet it would be curious to see the disposition of that furniture; to mark in what snug repositories, bonds and bills, and deeds of mortgage were laid up; to behold the subtle labyrinths that were pregnant with schemes of cent per cent, and to see *Calculation* sitting on the memory, with a table of compound interest in her hand.

FINALLY, before I parted with my glass, I would have a glance at your mind, where, I suppose, I should see *Tom Jones*, and *Martin's*

tin's concertos, in a distinguished point of view ; but if you, in return, should be determined to look into mine, I assure you, that you would be disappointed, for you would scarce see any thing there but yourself.

L E T.

LETTER XII.

IF I could envy the man I love, I should look with an evil eye upon you; not on account of your late acquisitions, believe me; nor yet that you are five years younger, and four inches taller than myself. All these things I can bear, as becometh a philosopher, and a christian. But that you should have, or pretend to have, so much indifference to the events of human life, provokes me beyond all patience. What! shall a man, who is grown pale over Seneca, and Epictetus, and Antoninus, who has outwatched the weary hour of midnight, in treasuring up aphorisms, and enabling himself to think and talk learnedly *de contemptu mundi*—shall such a one be out-theoried, out-practised by a boy? There is no bearing it.

• • • BUT

BUT are you really that indifferent, happy creature you represent yourself to be? It may be so. There is a constitutional, as well as a philosophical indifference, which may properly enough be called *natural* philosophy. I will allow you that, but have too much envy to compliment you with the other.

LISTEN, however, to one serious truth, which, I find, I have ill-nature enough to tell you. There is no knowing how the heart will bear those misfortunes which have been contemplated, but never felt. We are but little affected by a distant view of evil, and it is good for our peace that it should be so. If your philosophy be merely ideal, my envy is gone; and of that kind I am willing to flatter myself it is; for what have you met with sufficient to exercise the patience of a philosopher? Have you encountered any of those dreadful distresses that rend the heart,
and

and shake the brain? Has the bosom of love or friendship been chilled in your supporting arms by the hand of death? Have you parted from all that was dear to you, in despair of ever beholding or enjoying the object more? If you have endured those things with indifference, you are a philosopher indeed; but if you have suffered them only in imagination, you have nothing whereof to boast. I have known you almost ever since you entered into this world, and I cannot recollect any thing of which you had cause to complain. Happier than I have been, who hardly ever knew a father, and was called to weep over the grave of an excellent mother, before I had it in my power to give her any testimony of my gratitude, you still live in the sunshine of parental love, and whenever that is clouded, I dare say your sensibility will get the better of your philosophy.

BUT I find I am losing very fast the good humour with which I sat down to write to you : I will therefore put an end to this scrawl, after I have told you, that though I frequently wish for that insensibility, on which the ease of the heart depends, I never admire those who are possessed of it. *Equidem invideo, non miror.* And I think I should despise myself, could I walk the stage of life, like some impassive alderman,

With thoughtless eye, and fauntering pace,
And broad felicity of face.

BUT be you wiser than I am, and cherish that indifference of which you boast.

L E T T E R XIII.

HOW far a wise man ought to be affected by the opinion of others, is an important question. It concerns the happiness of you and me, and every man; and I thank you for calling upon me to consider it.

I HAVE considered it, and conclude that we ought not to be affected by the opinions of any but wise and good men; and even by theirs, only so far as they evidently coincide with truth and our own conscience.

By this rule we shall reduce our censors to a very small number; for take mankind in the gross, and that two thirds of them will come under the denomination of fools or knaves is beyond a doubt. What opinion either of

these may form of us, it is, certainly, never worth our while to know. A fool cannot form any abstract idea of your character, and a knave will never entertain a just one. The first cannot trace an action to its principle, and the latter will assign to the principle the complexion of his own. To be under any concern, therefore, what sentiments these may entertain of us, would be to partake of the folly of the fool, and to give force to the malignity of the knave.

BUT if we fall under the censure of wise and good men, we ought to make a severe scrutiny into that part of our conduct, which has drawn upon us their displeasure. Such men never censure without cause, and, though they may be mistaken; yet, even in that case, we should endeavour to justify our conduct as well to them as to ourselves. Happy is the man who has a wife, an honest, and a candid

friend, who will not scruple to point out to him the defect, which lies too near his own eye to be seen. O for such a friend ! How should I rejoice in his correction !

Thus far should every man be affected by censure, as to his moral and social character. And now I know you will expect that I should observe how far an author ought to be concerned by it, as it may affect his literary reputation.

In this case the same rule may be observed as in the other. Consider your critics. Only in this case your censors will be much fewer, for instead of admitting the opinions of a third part of mankind, not one in a thousand should have the least weight with you. Not one in a thousand is capable of judging of the works of imagination at all, and of the finer efforts of that faculty, such as abstracted
poetry,

poetry, &c. not one in ten thousand can form any adequate idea. How few, then, are those of whose praise the poet need be ambitious ! How few whose censure he need regard !

THE thirst of universal applause must be a very troublesome sensation, and yet we often find it to be the *infirmity of noble minds*, which we see misled by false delicacy and haunted by the chimæra of vulgar opinion. What ridiculous, what romantic actions have been derived from this source ! What fools and madmen, what *Buckinghams* and *Whartons* has it made !

LETTER XIV.

I HAVE lately met with a very curious piece of ancient criticism, entitled “A Comparyfonne of the different worthynesse of those great Poets, *John Hopkins* and *Thomas Sternhold*.” BY A LEARNED CLERK.

I believe this is a very scarce tract, and shall therefore transcribe part of it for you. This learned clerk, you will find, is often in the right, though he sometimes mistakes the matter; and, perhaps, you will think him a better critic than Dryden, with respect to that famous passage in Sternhold, which Dryden professedly admired.

“ It hath full sorely grieved me, says he, that the name of Thomas Sternhold should stand before the name of John Hopkins in
the

the booke of Psalmody; for I professe that
master Hopkins maketh much pleasaunter
melody."

PSALM xxx. The followinge verses runne
marvellous smoothe and lightly from the
tounge.

What gain is in my blood, said I,
If death destroy my days?
Can dust declare thy majesty,
Or give thy truth its praise?

MASTER Hopkins understoode the daintie
arte of making his lines sound like his mean-
ing, as appeareth from his forcing the voice
to sound forth *ings*, in the worde *soundinge*,
as followeth;

P S A L M XXXIII.

Praise ye the Lord with harpe, and sing.
To him with psalterie:
With ten-string'd instrument *soundinge*;
Praise ye the Lord on high,

THERE is moreover maney times a daintie
simpleness and eke a tenderness of his ex-
pression, as in Psalm xxxv.

As they had been my brethren dear
I did myselfe behave,
As one that mourneth heavily
Aboute his mother's grave.

HE interrogateth with good rhetorique and
cleane language.

P S A L M LXXVII.

What, is his goodnesse quite decay'd,
And passed cleane awaye ?
Or is his promise now delay'd ?
And doth his truth decaye ?

HE was most covetous of the words *flout*
and strong, which thing testyfyeth his judge-
mente, for these words bee exceedinge poe-
ticallye.

P S A L M XXVII.

At length I know the Lord's good grace:
 Shall make me *strong and stout*,
 My foes to foil and clean disgrace
 That compass me about.

P S A L M LXV.

With strength thou art beset about,
 And compass'd with thy power:
 Thou mak'st the mountains *strong and stout*,
 To stand in every shower.

P S A L M LXXX.

The hills were cover'd round about
 With shade that from it came:
 Also the cedars *strong and stout*,
 With branches of the same.

P S A L M XXXV.

Thou dost defend the weak from them
 That are both *stout and strong*;
 And rid the poor from wicked men,
 That spoil and do them wrong.

BUT

BUT I am mostly delighted with his xlvii
psalm, where some of the verses are to be ad-
mired as the beautie of all poetrie.

No, though the sea do rage so fore,
That alle the bankes it spills,
And though it overflowe the shore,
And breake down mightie hills;

Yet one fair flood doth send abroad,
His pleasaunt streams apace,
To glad the citie of our God,
And wash his holy place.

MASTER Sernhold was not so wise, foras-
much as he was fulle often vulgareley low.

P S A L M XLIV.

As sheepe unto the shambles sent,
Even so they deale with us.

AND he calleth upon God to get up, as if
he might be the chamberlain, Psalm lxiv.

Up Lord! why sleepest thou? awake!

AND he presenteth the Almighty as if he
were smoking a pipe.

P S A L M

[60]

PSALM XVIII.

And from his nostrils went a smoke,
When kindled was his ire.

AND he maketh him ride upon the backs
of cherubim as if he could not walk.

On cherub and on cherubim
Full royally he rode.

THESE are the principal criticisms: If you
would see the whole, come to *****.

LET-

L E T T E R X V .

MELANCHOLY is the aspect of *Ford-place* ! I thought, as I passed it the other day, that the house itself seemed conscious of being deserted, all about it was so silent and solemn. The only living creatures I saw were two sparrows and a redbreast. The sparrows were fighting about a lodging in the roof ; while the redbreast, perched upon the temple of Vulcan, sung the following

M O N O D Y .

The gentle pair that in these lonely shades,
 Wandering, at eve or morn, I oft have seen,
 Now all in vain I seek at eve or morn,
 With drooping wing, forlorn,
 Along the grove, along the daizied green.
 For them I've warbled many a summer's day,
 'Till the light dews impearled all the plain,
And

And the glad shepherd shut his nightly fold ;
 Stories of love, and fond adventures old
 Were the dear subjects of my tuneful strain.

Ah ! where is now the hope of all my lays ?
 Now they, perchance, that heard them all are
 With them the meed of melody is fled, [dead !
 And fled with them the listening ear of praise.
 Vainly I dreamt, that when the wintry sky
 Scatter'd the white flood on the wasted plain,
 When not one berry, not one leaf was nigh,
 To soothe keen hunger's pain,
 Vainly I dreamt my songs might not be vain.
 That oft within the hospitable hall
 Some scatter'd fragment haply I might find
 Some friendly crumb perchance for me design'd,
 When seen despairing on the neighbouring wall.
 Deluded bird ! those hopes are now no more !
 Dull time has blasted the departing year,
 And winter frowns severe,
 Wrapping his wan limbs in his mantle hoar.
 Yet not within the hospitable hall
 The chearful sound of human voice I hear ;
 No piteous eye is near,
 To see me drooping on the lonely wall.

Now

Now you have heard a redbreast's song,
you shall hear a song

To a Redbreast.

Little bird, with bosom red,
Welcome to my humble shed !
Courtly domes of high degree
Have no room for thee and me.
Pride and pleasure's fickle throng
Nothing mind an idle song.

Daily near my table steal,
While I pick my scanty meal.
Doubt not, little thief, there be;
But I'll cast a crumb to thee.
Well rewarded, if I spy
Pleasure in thy glancing eye;
See thee, when thou'lt eat thy fill;
Plume thy breast, and wipe thy bill.

Come, my feather'd friend, again !
Well thou know'st the broken pane.
Ask of me thy daily store :
Go not near AVARO's door :
Once within his iron-hall,
Woeful end shall thee befall.

Savage !

Savage!—He would soon divest
Of its rosy plumes thy breast;
Nor should innocence, or song,
Thy unpitied life prolong.

LET-

L E T T E R XVI.

I REJOICE in your good wishes, as they are a new proof of your regard for me, and as I am sure they proceed from the tenderness of friendship. But what, my dear sir, can he want who is already content; who lives within the limits of his circumstances, and who has said unto his desires, *Thus far shall ye go, and no farther?* This is the end of all philosophy, and poor is the philosopher who has not gained this end. If a man preserves such a state of mind, he acts agreeably to his reasonable nature; if he does not, it were better as Lord B. says, that he wore a long tail, and went upon four legs. His Lordship recommends such a condition as preferable to that of a man who should not be permitted to make use of his reason; and pray where

is

is the difference, whether the use of that faculty be restrained or neglected?

I know a friend of yours, who has found out a scheme for evading two christian duties, and I believe too it is an innocent one. These duties are mortification and self-denial. For his part, he never practises either of them, and he manages it thus. He neither covets his neighbours house, nor his wife, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is his. He looks upon the possessions of every man not only with an unenvious, but with an indifferent eye; by which means he avoids a thousand mortifications, which his own curiosity, or the vanity of others, would daily bring upon him.

THIS, you will say, is a certain consequence, but how came he by such a state of mind, or how does he manage it to be indif-

should run against him in her course, he would not avoid her, but he will lay no trap for her. "No, poor Fortune," says he, "you are blind, and I will not deceive you. Should you fall into my embrace, you would be disappointed. I am not of your family. Your votaries, it seems, must have *a little of the fool, and much of the knave**. I am the reverse. I have little of the knave, and much of the fool. So, dear Fortune, if you stumble upon me, it will be your own fault."

Is not this an honest way of thinking; More honest than wise perhaps you will say. Be it so. But it is to his purpose to think honestly wisdom, for the same reason that he thinks contentment wealth.

HE takes a due estimate of riches, and gives them credit for all they are worth. He

* BACON'S Moral Essays.

acknowledges that they will not only purchase the conveniences but the elegancies of life ; that they will aid the intercourse of friendship, and enable a man to look forward to approaching age without the apprehension of want. This is all that any reasonable man will allow them. On the other hand, they have inconveniences enough to set against these advantages. In a religious respect, they add a heavy load to the duties of life : In a moral sense, they are dangerous, for they frequently overturn the virtues of temperance and humility, and establish pride and luxury on their ruins. Though they may aid the intercourse of friendship, they will endanger its sincerity ; for the sunshine of affluence engenders many reptiles, which deserve rather the name of sycophants than of friends.—

The friendship of the great must therefore always be tinged with suspicion ; but *if a poor man has a friend, he is to him as a right*

land, or a right eye. As the poet said of
his mistress,

The smile of Fortune might suspicion raise.
But here he knows that he is lov'd alone.

By this free and philosophic way of thinking, your friend evades the duties I above-mentioned; and I beg you will give due credit to my sincerity, when I assure you that there can be no *self-denial* so troublesome to me as that of declining your kind invitation, and that I know of nothing which could *mortify* me so much as your neglecting to write to me.

L E T-

LETTER XVII.

From * * * *.

IT has often given me pain to behold the poor provision that is made for the younger clergy. When a person of a genteel education, perhaps of a genteel family, which is often the case, is confined to the miserable pittance of thirty or forty pounds a year, what must he feel, if he has the least sensibility? I never see a curate of a parish, either in town or country, without looking upon him as a person suffering under the very bad regulations of the ecclesiastical police. There are many ways, I think, by which this matter might be mended. I easily foresee that those clergymen who are in possession of livings would find it no difficult matter to give reasons against advancing the stipend of their curates. And in many cases, no doubt, their

pleas might be very just: But supposing that means might be found for advancing the income of livings, the beneficed clergyman might then be able to pay his curate more liberally. And I do not think that this would be a difficult affair. What, if an act of parliament could be procured for the better payment of vicarial tythes? This I am sure of, that some such act is necessary, for if I may form a general judgment, from my own private observation, I do not believe that two thirds of the value of vicarial tythes are paid throughout England. The value of every thing is greatly increased to the farmer, while the consideration which the vicar receives for his tythes is frequently regulated by the estimate of former centuries.

SURELY the decent provision of so large and so respectable a body as the clergy, merits the attention of the legislature. It is impossible

impossible that society should subsist without divine sanctions, and shall the ministers of those sanctions be left unable to support that dignity, which the nature of their office requires? Shall the thread-bare coat of a clergyman be the jest of the purse-proud grazier or farmer, while he withholds his indisputable rights? What strange regulations are these? A taylor, a shoe-maker, an exciseman, a common day-labourer has frequently an income equal to that of a curate, whose education and profession entitle him to the character of a gentleman, and give him a right to keep the best company.

LET-

L E T T E R XVIII.

YOU have read of a philosopher who laughed but once in his life, and of another who never laughed at all, I am convinced that neither of these sages could have resisted the risible impulse, had they met with an absurdity like that of the Spanish poet who fell into my hands this morning. In a stanza on the nightingale, he says, *when I hear that little bird so vary and multiply its tones, I suppose that it has got a hundred thousand other nightingales in its belly, that sing through its throat.* But you shall have the passage.

Con diferencia tal, con gracia tanta,
 Aquel Ruyseñor llora ; que sospecho
 Que tiene otros cien mil dentro del pecho,
 Que alterna su dolor por su Garganta.

Of all the hyperboles I have met with, this grave Spaniard's is the most ridiculous.

THERE are two kinds of poetry which afford me equal entertainment. If it be either very good or very bad, I am sure to find my account in reading it, and the middling sort only to me is intolerable. Somewhere or other I met with a poem, the subject of which was a party of pleasure, or an excursion to the coast of *Sussex*; and the minute descriptions of the excursive Bard, I remember, delighted me much. Describing their party, he says,

There were three amiable sisters here;
Besides, each sister had a brother dear.

Sometimes he would rise to the sublime, as in the following couplet on the tea-kettle:

The burning lamp, with spirits well supplied,
Did swell the kettle in a boiling tide.

But

But description seems to have been his talent.
Speaking of the pleasures of their journey, he
represents the very steeds they rode upon as
delighted.

Our horses too were pleased most sensibly,
And prick'd their ears, and cock'd their tails
on high.

With equal happiness of expression he de-
scribes the honourable and gentleman-like
sentiments of the party.

And when as long as well we could, we staid,
Then, without grudging, each his reckoning
paid.

Now that you have seen part of the works
of this extraordinary Bard, perhaps you may
be curious to know his name. All that I
can learn of it is from a couplet of his own,
prefixed to his poetical works.

Ye young in years, I dedicate to you
All these my works, sign'd E. and W.

I some-

I sometimes imagine that there is a kind of poetical incubus which has violent commerce with innocent persons, and makes them bring forth these misshapen monsters of the mind.

AFTER the defeat of the rebels, the duke in his return from *Scotland*, called at *Corby* castle in *Cumberland*, a seat of Mr. *Howard*. The family was from home, and the gardener shewed the ornaments of the place to the duke, during which he took the liberty to tell him, that he had composed a poem on the gardens, statues, &c. Here, said his highness, are the statues of *Cephalus* and *Procris*: What have you said of these? To which the blue-aproned Bard replied;

He bent his bow, and shot at random,
And kill'd his wife for a *memorandum*.

LET-

LETTER XIX.

From * * *.

THE scurrilous terms of jilts, coquettes and prudës, so ungenerously applied to the fair part of our species were, doubtless, the invention of mortified impudence, or disappointed vanity. To their praise be it spoken, they are always honourable, always consistent, always sincere. They never, like faithless men, shed the dissembled or the designing tear.—Their tears, poor hearts! always flow from pity or from love. So one of their own sex, *Madam Schigee*, has assured us.—Another French Lady too, *Madam de L'Enclos*, has done and said much for the honour of her sex. She has proved to a demonstration that what narrow-thoughted people say of the inconstancy of women is all

all moonshine; it being very clear that inconstancy is the doctrine of Nature! Excellent woman! Far be it from me ever to let my censure fall upon the fair, but I think they are ungrateful to her memory, if she is yet undistinguished by temples and altars.

NATURE has always been partial to our sex, and profuse in her favours to the ladies of every country. She has not only armed them with the gentle and attractive graces, but inspired their tender hearts with heroic resolution and noble resentment: Witness the never to be forgotten *Madam de Sicks*, who, when she was happily rid of an odious husband in this world, changed her religion, that she might not see him in the next. What an extraordinary instance of greatness of mind have we in the celebrated *Christina*, who could leave the important

dignity

dignity of a throne, and the troublesome cares of a nation's happiness, to retire into the bosom of Science and the arms of the Muses ! to feed on the delicious praise of the sons of literature, and enjoy the approbation of soothing abbots !

CAN any thing be more laudable than sincerity, than the ingenuous acknowledgment of our weakness ? And how many illustrious ladies of our own age and nation, have been remarkable for this ! Why should I mention *Vane* or lady *Mary*, or *Manly*, or *Behn* of open-hearted memory ; or the celebrated *Constantia Philips*, whose noble ardour meeting with no suitable return from the inhabitants of this cold climate, was at last indulged by the more genial suns of *Jamaica* ; whither she greatly retired, to cherish her native fires, and woo her sable loves ?

It were easy for me to produce many other shining instances of female virtue; such as, for your idle encomiums, I wish you may never have the honour to know.

L E T T E R XX.

WHAT could incense so polite a man as Mr. * * * *, against the most amiable part of the creation? Is it possible that a person of his sensibility can be dissatisfied with that charming sex, against which he levels his satyrical irony?

THERE is, indeed, a spirit of reviling gone out against the fair part of our species, and if you are possessed with that, I must endeavour to conjure it out of you. Stand still: Let me draw a circle around you——
And now I mutter my spell.

THE benevolent Author of the universe, consulting only the happiness of his creatures, has appointed variety of means to promote the sweet union of love. Probably for this
end

end alone he constituted difference of sexes,
 And what has he not done for the female of
 our own species to make her amiable in our
 eyes? All the soft and gentle graces, the
 sweet smiles of winning beauty, the obedient
 blush of modesty, the charming fears of de-
 pendent weakness, and the tender apprehen-
 sions of the feeling heart, are for this pur-
 pose appropriated to that lovely sex. By
 what fine proportions, what nicely moulded
 features, what expressive eyes, what delicate
 complexions are many of them distinguished!
 Many of them, whose beauty is the least of
 their praise: For theirs are the finer orna-
 ments of the mind, sense embellished and hu-
 manized by an habitual softness of manners,
 and knowledge collected from the labours of
 the Muses. Theirs is the practice of every
 moral and social duty. All the virtues that
 are founded in the sensibility of the heart are
 eminently theirs. Pity, the attribute of an-
 gels,

gets, and friendship, the balm of life, delight to dwell in the female breast. What a forlorn, what a savage creature would man be without the humanizing offices of the gentle sex ! How much are his mind and manners softened and refined by the delicate passion of love ! Is it not for the fair object of his affections, that he studies all the elegant and embellishing graces ? Does he not imitate her polished manners, and acquire, as it were by sympathy, her tender and delicate sentiments ? After the endearing union of their loves and interests, when mutual confidence has removed every apprehension, what are the pleasures that he may not enjoy ? How are his cares softened, his prospects brightened, his delights enhanced by communication ! How ungrateful then, should he reproach that amiable sex, from which he derives in some measure, both his virtue and his happiness !

WHAT do the several names that you have collected prove, but that women may have great talents, of which some of those names will be a lasting monument? Many of them, indeed, behaved in a manner unworthy of those talents, but probably their ingenuity was a snare to them; for libertines take a diabolical pleasure in ruining the virtues they admire.

* * * * *

L E T T E R X X I.

CAN you tell me who was the author of that short aphorism, *Happiness begins at home*? If I knew his name, I would build a temple, or at least dedicate a volume to his memory. Whether he were a courtier or a cottager, I am sure that he was a wise man and perfectly acquainted with human nature. I never felt this truth so sensibly as at present. During my late peregrination, I was frequently amused, sometimes pleased, but always dissipated. Very different now that I am returned to my own apartments, my mind is perfectly at ease, and has recovered that even calmness, which, in my opinion, is preferable to all those meteor-like pleasures, which, after a momentary glitter, dissolve in vapours. With what pleasure do I now re-

collect

collect those beautiful lines of Catullus, a translation of which I beg you will receive instead of a longer letter.

O quid solutis beatius curis !

Cum mens onus reponit, ac peregrino

Labore fessi, venimus larem ad nostrum,

Defideratoque acquiescimus lecto.

O for the dear domestic hour,

When care foregoes the peaceful mind ;

When tir'd with many a painful tour,

At length an easy home we find ;

At length repose the weary head

Safe on our old acquainted bed !

LETTER XXII.

THE author of an Essay on Education, has reckoned among other species of poetry to which blank verse may be adapted, the pastoral. I do not remember to have met with any original pieces of the pastoral kind in blank verse, but I am nevertheless of opinion, that the thing might be attempted with success. That species of verse is indeed incapable of any thing vulgarly low or rustic, except in the burlesque way, but it is not on that account unqualified for the pastoral. For can the scene of this poetry be supposed to lie among the boors, who till the fields and tend the flocks in our own days, among whom no poetry ever existed; and who, in point of understanding, are very little superior to the cattle

cattle they superintend ? Without doubt the proper æra to which pastoral poetry should be referred, is that age of simplicity when the princes of the people were confessedly employed in the labours of the field ; when ploughmen and shepherds were historians, poets, legislators, and astronomers. Such times there certainly were, if any credit is to be given to profane history ; and, referred to such times as those, the pastoral may be a composition of that dignity and simplicity to which blank verse is so well adapted.

BUT you make it your question, whether we cannot have a species of pastoral poetry drawn from our own times ? I answer No, if our own shepherds must be the Interlocutors. Besides, tho' the face of nature is the same, the manners and customs of mankind are greatly changed ; and what a strange figure would those of our peasants make
in

in any kind of poetry except the burlesque !

BOTH Theocritus and Virgil found it necessary to draw their pictures of pastoral life from times much higher than their own, and though they sometimes introduced recent events in their *Bucolics*, it was with no more propriety than the shepherd's boy of Pope was introduced feeding his flock and singing his polished song on the banks of the Thames.

BUT Theocritus was less guilty of this than any of his imitators have been ; he does not often, in those poems called pastorals, draw the action from his own times ; he sometimes goes four or five hundred years higher for it.

UPON the whole, truth, nature, and propriety all plead for confining the subjects of
the

the pastoral to those times of simplicity which we call the golden age.

I WILL conclude these observations with a specimen of such a pastoral as I am here speaking of, upon the merit of which, however, I shall not rest the cause.

MENALCAS : a Pastoral.

Now cease your sweet pipes, shepherds !
 cease your lays,
 Ye warbling train, that fill the echoing groves
 With your melodious love-notes ! Die ye winds,
 That o'er Arcadian valleys blow ! Ye streams,
 Ye garrulous old streams, suspend your course,
 And listen to Menalcas —————

MENALCAS.

Come fairest of the beauteous train that sport
 On Ladon's flowery side, my Delia come !
 For thee thy shepherd, silent as he sits
 Within the green wood, sighs ; for thee prepares
 The various wreath in vain ; explores the shade
 Where lowly lurks the violet blue, where droops,

In tender beauty, its fair spotted bells
 The cowslip : oft with plaintive voice he calls
 The wakeful echo, wearies with thy name
 The wakeful echo—What are streams or flowers,
 Or songs of blythe birds ? What the blushing
 rose,
 Young health, or music, or the voice of praise,
 The smile of vernal suns, the fragrant breath
 Of evening gales, when Delia dwells afar ?

L E T.

L E T T E R. XXIII.

To the same.

YOU need not be jealous of my friendship, since, how well soever I may love the object of it, my heart will still have room enough for you. Your concern for the peace of it, however, is kind ; and I am perfectly of your opinion as to the general danger of entering into friendship with the softer sex. I am well aware how easily the passion of the lover will take root in the affection of the friend, and what thin partitions form their bounds. When hearts are united in the warm and tender connections of friendship, it is not difficult to foresee, in what such a sympathy between different sexes might terminate. But, with these convictions upon me, can you think

me

me in danger ? Do not you think I shall guard every avenue to my heart with the utmost diligence ? Indeed I shall ; and I cannot but think myself safe, in this particular instance, for many reasons. Should I fall, I assure you my fall would be involuntary ; and, moreover, be assured, that, should this be the case, you shall never know it.—You shall have no opportunity to plume yourself upon your sagacity, nor gravely say, with a self-approving pity, *I told you how this would end*. I own, however, I find such a charm in the friendship of this amiable and accomplished woman, that I should not know how to give it up, were I apprehensive of the danger you mention.

THE question you put, “ Whether friendship can subsist at all between different

rent sexes, exclusively of love?" I am interested in answering, and shall be as explicit as possible.

It is certain, that the admiration of great qualities or virtues in any person, is frequently an inducement to us to cultivate the regard and acquaintance of such a one. Friendship may, therefore, have its origin in esteem. For my own part, I believe that to be the genuine foundation of it; and that, friendship constructed upon any other principle, will prove but a building of straw. I even look upon consent of manners and inclinations to be a more unessential basis of friendship than esteem; and I have known two very dear friends, of tempers totally different, united upon this principle. Now, is it not possible that I may admire the same great qualities which I behold in you, in a person of a different sex? If so, is it
not

not equally possible that the esteem consequent upon this admiration may exist distinctly from every other sensation? Certainly it may, since it had not the sex, but the qualities of the person for its object. This must be granted upon demonstration; and will it be denied that the same cause must produce the same effects? Would not the same esteem, which was the origin of my friendship with you, produce the same friendship for your sister, or your grandmother, or any woman upon earth? The point is very clear, therefore let us leave it; and now turn your eyes upon the amiable lady who led us to the subject.

SHE is arrived at that period of life when women become the most agreeable friends. She is neither too old to be lively, nor too young to be grave, so that in either state of mind she appears equally graceful and unaffected.

affected. In her more serious moments, there is a mixture of tender melancholy and philosophic calmness in her countenance, which is so expressive, that it serves for a comment on her thoughts. You read the approaching reflection in her eye, which, as Prior says, “ Drops sense distinct and clear.” Her mind, however, is not the mansion of melancholy but of cheerfulness; which, agreeably to the definition of Addison, exerts itself rather as a habit than as an act. In conversation she shews the true politeness, for she always endeavours to make it turn upon those subjects, which she thinks the most agreeable to you; and, though she does not talk with brilliancy, she talks sensibly on every thing. She is acquainted with the French and Italian writers, whose works she reads in the original language, and is conversant with the politest and most elegant authors of our own country. Had her taste

been early formed, and her studies directed by proper persons, both her knowledge and her judgment in the *Belles Lettres*, would have been more considerable than they are; but it is not yet too late for her to excel in these points, and whatever industry can obtain she will obtain, for she is indefatigable in her application to study. She possesses the native seeds of taste and genius, the strongest proof of which is her manner of writing, which is spirited and nervous. That charming sensibility which is the glory of the female nature, and makes that amiable sex so properly the object of our love and tenderness, this lady possesses in a very eminent degree. I do not think I shall say too much if I apply to her what was spoken of another lady, that she never beheld distress which she did not pity, and never pitied when she not, if it was in her power, relieve. Her mind is naturally formed to be above e

thing that is mean or sordid ; her sentiments are enlarged ; and her heart, like her countenance, is open. I do not think that she deserves much praise for her virtues. They are constitutional, and not to practice them would be a violence to her nature. Her favourite science is music, and in this she excels most women that I have met with. She perfectly understands both the practical and theoretical part, and her expression, unlike the general execution of ladies, is both bold and graceful. It perhaps may give you no favourable idea of her person, to tell you that she appears to the greatest advantage in a full dress, unless you have observed that it is the same with many ladies, who are reputed handsome. She is about the middle size of women, genteelly and proportionably form'd ; her hair is a beautiful brown ; her countenance neither round nor oval, but somewhat between both ; her complexion is

fresh; and her eyes rather soft than vivid,
but full of expression.

THUS have I answered, if not satisfied all
your demands.——And now, for supper,
“ With what appetite I may.”

LET

L E T T E R XXIV.

To the same.

THOUGH our pleasures always fall short of hope and imagination, we are much more frequently deceived by the sensual, than the intellectual. The delights of friendship, memory and contemplation, seldom disappoint us much in what we expect from them, particularly the two last, as they are entirely dependent on ourselves. Indeed, were all people of your disposition, who seem to devote yourself wholly to the inclinations of those that love you, the pleasures of friendship would be as certain as any other that we enjoy. Yet as we can but have few friends, and the company of those few, perhaps, only occasionally, the treasures of the mind must be our great re-

source ; and there is no faculty to which we are so much indebted for entertainment as the memory. I was led into this train of thinking by the pleasure I received in a late visit to the place of my nativity. The scenes of thoughtless gaiety and puerile amusement, which I had so long ago forsaken, referred to my mind many pleasing images which were connected with them. The romantic aspect of my native country cherished in my early years a kind of innocent enthusiasm ; and the rude contrast of rocks, and woods, and waters, impressed something of their own wild irregularity on my imagination. When I revisited those scenes you will suppose that they re-kindled in some measure that enthusiasm they first inspired,

A N O D E

To the Genius of Westmorland.

Hail hidden Power of these wild groves,
These uncouth rocks, and mountains grey!
Where oft, as fades the closing day,
The family of Fancy roves.

In what lone cave, what sacred cell,
Coæval with the birth of time,
Wrapt in high cares, and thought sublime,
In awful silence dost thou dwell?

Oft in the depth of winter's reign,
As blew the bleak winds o'er the dale,
Moaning along the distant gale,
Has Fancy heard thy voice complain.

Oft in the dark wood's lonely way,
Swift has she seen thee glancing by;
Or down the summer evening sky,
Sporting in clouds of gilded day.

If caught from thee the sacred fire,
 That glow'd within my youthful breast.
 Those thoughts too high to be express'd,
 Genius, if thou didst once inspire;

O pleas'd accept this votive lay,
 That in my native shades retir'd,
 And once, once more by thee inspir'd,
 In gratitude I pay.

LET-

LETTER XXV.

INCLOSED is a copy of the poem you requested. I have no scruple in furnishing you with a prayer to the God of Wealth, because I am convinced that you will never become his votary.

HYMN to PLUTUS.

Great God of Wealth, before whose sacred
throne
Truth, honour, genius, fame and worth lie prone !
To thy throng'd temples take one votary more :
To thee a poet never kneel'd before.

Adieu the gods that caught my early prayer !
Wisdom that frown'd, and knowledge fraught
with care !
Friendship that every veering gale could move !
And tantalizing hope, and faithless love !
These, these are slaves that in thy livery shine ;
For wisdom, friendship, love himself is thine !

For thee I'll labour down the mine's dark way,
And leave the confines of enlivening day;
For thee *Astoria's* shining sands explore,
And bare the splendors of Potosi's ore;
Scale the high rock, and tempt the raging fire,
And think, and toil, and wish, and wake for thee:

Farewell the scenes that thoughtless youth could
please!

The flowery scenes of indolence and ease!
Where you the way with magic power beguile,
Bassora's deeps, or Lybia's deserts smile.

Foes of thy worth, that, insolent and vain,
Deride thy maxims, and reject thy reign,
The frantic tribe of virtue shall depart,
And make no more their ravage in my heart.
Away "The tears that pity taught to flow!"
Away that anguish for a brother's woe!
Adieu to these, and every tiresome guest,
That drain'd my fortunes or destroy'd my rest!

Ah, good AVARO! could I thee despise?
Thee, good AVARO; provident and wise?
Plutus, forgive the bitter things I've said!
What heart so harmless as a heart of lead?

Yet,

Yet, yet I'm thine; while fame's unerring tongue
In thy sooth'd ear thus pours her silver song.

- " Immortal Plutus ! God of golden ease !
- " Form'd every heart, and every eye to please !
- " For thee Content her downy carpet spreads,
- " And rosy Pleasure swells her genial beds,
- " 'Tis thine to gild the mansions of despair ;
- " And beam a glory round the brows of care.
- " To cheat the lazy pace of sleepless hours,
- " With marble fountains, and ambrosial bowers !"

O grant me, Plutus, scenes like those I sung,
My youthful lyre when vernal fancy strung.
For me their shades let other STUPIDITYS fear,
Tho' each tree's water'd with a widow's tear !

LET-

L E T T E R XXVI.

THE hymn to Plutus was only a kind of mock-worship, such as savages pay to a power they hate, and in which the heart has no concern. However, to take off every unfavourable impression which that hymn may possibly have left upon your mind, I here inclose another, written since that, and addressed to a very different power.

H Y M N to HUMANITY.

I.

Parent of virtue, if thine ear
 Attend not now to sorrow's cry;
 If now the pity-streaming tear
 Should haply on thy cheek be dry;
 Indulge my votive strain, O sweet HUMANITY.

II.

Come, ever welcome to my breast !
 A tender, but a chearful guest.
 Nor always in the gloomy cell
 Of life-consuming sorrow dwell ;
 For sorrow, long-indulg'd and slow,
 Is to Humanity a foe ;
 And grief, that makes the heart its prey,
 Wears sensibility away.
 Then comes, sweet nymph, instead of thee,
 The gloomy fiend, stupidity.

III.

O may that fiend be banished far,
 Tho' passions hold eternal war !
 Nor ever let me cease to know
 The pulse that throbs at joy or woe.
 Nor let my vacant cheek be dry,
 When sorrow fills a brother's eye ;
 Nor may the tear that frequent flows
 From private or from social woes,
 E'er make this pleasing sense depart.
 Ye Cares, O harden not my heart !

IV.

If the fair star of fortune smile,
 Let not its flattering power beguile.
 Nor, borne along the fav'ring tide,
 My full sails swell with bloating pride;
 Let me from wealth but hope content,
 Remembering still it was but lent;
 To modest merit spread my store,
 Unbar my hospitable door;
 Nor feed, for pomp, an idle train,
 While want unpitied pines in vain.

V.

If heaven, in every purpose wise,
 The envied lot of wealth denies;
 If doom'd to drag life's painful load
 Thro' poverty's uneven road,
 And, to support the passing day,
 Destin'd to toil as well as pray;
 To thee, HUMANITY, still true,
 I'll wish the good I cannot do;
 And give the wretch that wanders by,
 A soothing word—a tear—a sigh.

VI.

Howe'er exalted, or depressed,
 Be ever mine the feeling breast.
 From me remove the stagnant mind
 Of languid indolence, reclin'd ;
 The soul that one long sabbath keeps,
 And thro' the sun's whole circle sleeps ;
 Dull Peace, that dwells in Folly's eye,
 And self-attending Vanity.
 Alike, the foolish, and the vain
 Are strangers to the sense humane.

VII.

O for that sympathetic glow
 Which taught the holy tear to flow,
 When the prophetic eye survey'd
 Sion in future ashes laid !
 Or, rais'd to heav'n, implor'd the bread
 That thousands in the desert fed !
 Or, when the heart o'er friendship's grave
 Sigh'd and forgot its power to save——
 O for that sympathetic glow
 Which taught the holy tear to flow !

VIII.

It comes : It fills my labouring breast
 I feel my beating heart oppress.
 Oh ! hear that lonely widow's wail !
 See her dim eye ! her aspect pale !
 To heaven she turns in deep despair.
 Her infants wonder at her prayer,
 And, mingling tears they know not why,
 Lift up their little hands, and cry.
 O God ! their moving sorrows see !
 Support them, sweet HUMANITY !

IX.

Life, fill'd with grief's distressful train,
 For ever asks the tear humane.
 Behold in yon unconscious grove
 The victims of ill-fated love !
 Heard you that agonizing throe ?
 Sure this is not romantic woe !
 The golden day of joy is o'er ;
 And now they part—to meet no more.
 Assist them, hearts from anguish free !
 Support them, sweet HUMANITY !

X.

Parent of virtue, if thine ear

Attend not now to sorrow's cry ;

If now the pity-streaming tear

Should haply on thy cheek be dry,

Indulge my votive strain, O sweet HUMANITY!

L E T T E R XXVII.

To Mr. ———.

FROM scenes where fancy no excursion
 tries,
 Nor trusts her wing to smoke envelop'd skies ;
 Far from the town's detested haunts remov'd,
 And nought but thee deserted that I lov'd ;
 From noise and folly and the world got free,
 One truant thought yet only stays for thee.

What is that world which makes the heart its
 slave ?

A restless sea revolving wave on wave.
 There rage the storms of each uncertain clime :
 There float the wrecks of fortune and of time :
 There hope's smooth gales in soft succession
 blow,
 While disappointment hides the rock below.
 The syren pleasures tune their fatal breath,
 And lull you to the long repose of death.

What is that world ? at ——— 'tis no more
 Than the next ocean while we walk the shore.

Loud

Loud roar the winds and swell the wild waves
 high,
 Lash the rude beach, and frighten all the sky ;
 No longer shall my little bark be rent,
 Since *Hope* resign'd her anchor to *Content*.

As some poor fisher that, escap'd with life,
 Will trust no more to elemental strife ;
 But sits in safety on the green-bank side,
 And lives upon the leavings of the tide ;
 Like him contented you your friend shall see,
 As safe, as happy, and as poor as he.

L E T T E R XXVIII.

I DO not think it would be worth your while to form any poem on the new *Eloisa*, for though the work has great merit, there is something unnatural in the character of the Heroïne. I have no patience with her when she tells her lover that, were she unmarried, and might chuse her husband, she would prefer Mr. Wolmar to him——nay, more wonderful still, if a widow, she would not marry him ! and all this is effected by I know not what sudden fanatical impulse. These are unpardonable sins against sense and nature.

INDEED, to give you my free sentiments ; as to poetry, I think, *satis est potuisse videri*. You would certainly gain a more extensive reputation,

reputation, and do more real service to mankind by your prose writings. Your bold, subdued and elegant style, would adorn any subject that the *Belles Lettres* can afford you; and I should think you would find more entertainment in it, as you found less labour. Poetical and Platonic fancy might be abundantly indulged in the fields of allegory and imagination, at the same time that you were throwing some new and pleasing light on the paths of virtue. Go then, my Plato, my congenial friend and philosopher; explore the progress of truth and science from the groves of Academus to the shades of Britain, — Skilled in the history of mankind, you will be able to shew us the effects of learning on the several states and nations of the world; to trace its light slowly advancing through the regions of barbarism; to describe it now growing dim through the decay of public spirit, and now reviving under the auspices of liberty.

liberty. If you would write dialogues moral and historical, I am persuaded you would succeed. Though you need no pattern of a chaste style, it might not be amiss now and then to take up Lōrd Lyttelton's Dialogues of the Dead. Many of the subjects indeed are common, but the noble author has given them an air of novelty, by an elegance of manner which is worthy of imitation.

LET.

L E T T E R XXIX.

To Mrs. * * * *.

IT is with unaffected concern I hear the friendship which has so long subsisted between you and Mrs. * * *, is now likely to be dissolved. Believe me, when I first received this information I could give it no credit. It is impossible, said I, that the friendship of those ladies should be broken by any thing but death. Hearts so firmly united, so sympathetically allied, can only be torn from each other by violence. But when repeated mention of this affair, and when my own knowledge of the discontinuance of your visits had confirmed the truth of that report, which I most wished to be false, I then concluded that this event must have been produced by some very unfortunate, but very material cause. That confidence had been betrayed

or that treachery had been intended, that envy had burst the bonds of affection, or that the sure features of malignity had been discovered, I had not the least doubt; but was still uncertain as to the particular cause. It was not long, however, before this suspense was taken off, and I was convinced from undoubted intelligence that the important cause of this affecting quarrel was nothing less than——an **AFFRONT** ! Your sex, indefatigable in enquiries of that kind, at length found out that an *affront* had been given and taken in the warmth of argument : even an *affront* ! Had your quarrel been founded on some dishonourable violation of the laws of friendship, I should have been grieved ; as it is, I am ashamed. An *affront* ! The very term is become despicable in any society, but that of coquettes and coxcombs. For what should be an affront to a person of sense ? Shall a hasty ebullition of wit be deemed an
affront,

affront, because it borders on raillery, or seems pointed with ridicule? Surely it merits not to be regarded: at least it may be forgiven, because its end was not to insult, but to be admired. Such sallies of humour are common to people of gay and volatile imaginations, and human vanity is sometimes inclined to indulge them. They are certainly foibles, but I have known them to be the foibles of those who, in other respects, had great merit.

A SEVERE expression thrown out in the unthinking warmth of passion ought, in my opinion, no more to be esteemed an affront than the effusion of sarcastic wit. The end of those kind of expressions is indeed to give pain: But then, consider the state of the mind upon such occasions. Anger is, properly enough, said to be a short madness; for under its influence the empire of reason

is entirely overthrown. We ought therefore to regard the actions and expressions of a person, under such circumstances, in no other light than we would those of a madman. But pride interferes, and unfortunately for us, has frequently the same influence over reason as anger itself.

I BESEECH you, madam, to let your good sense interpose, and not to sacrifice the valuable blessing of friendship to the madness of a moment. Be not misled by false pride ; but be assured that whoever makes the first approaches to a reconciliation, gives the maturest proof of wisdom. Were you the offender, to take the first step towards a re-establishment of friendship would be ingenuous ; as you are the offended, it will be generous.

LET-

L E T T E R X X X .

AS you are a friend to the theatres, I am surprized you never lift up your voice against those formal figures called *the Three UNITIES*. They have amused the town with the words *truth* and *nature* and *probability*, till they have appointed such narrow limits to dramatic composition, that *genius* dares not give free scope to his wing, for fear he should soar beyond them. *Imagination* feels herself confined, and ventures not to exert her powers, while she beholds the finger of art limiting the sphere, and describing the circle in which she is to move. Such consequences has the reign of these petty tyrants. And what have we gained by giving up so much?

A dull

A dull regularity, an insipid consistency. The bold flights of gothic genius are no more, and all is symmetry and exactness and proportion.

BUT it is to aid the credibility of the plot, it seems, that unity of time, place, and action is observed; and Horace said long ago, *incredulus odi*. What! then, is *incredulus odi* Latin for the Three Unities? Did not the same poetical critic say, I am charmed with the Bard whose magic power *modo me Thebis, modo ponit Athenis*. What occasion for the scene to lie altogether *in one apartment*? We must be sensible, if we are awake at all, that the whole representation is a fiction. And why cannot we as well follow the imagination of the poet from region to region? It is still but fiction, and, if it be *spirited* fiction, I am sure it will not be without

without its effect. It is the same with regard to time.

BUT I have yet more to say against these Unities. Far from aiding probability, they generally wound it. It is amazing to see what a hubbub of wonderful events are crowded, in every modern play, into the short space of three hours. I remember, in a late comedy, there were two or three courtships projected, begun, carried on, and finished; writings were drawn for which an attorney would have charged ten pounds, as the reward of manual labour; and the whole state and sentiments of a family were as much changed in three hours as they could have been in three years.

NOTHING is more observable than that the accuracy of art has always been prejudicial to works of genius, and what they have

have gained in correctness they have lost in spirit. It is evidently so in music : It is false with poetry in general, and with dramatic poetry in particular.

LET

LETTER XXXI.

THE greatest of all plagues is the plague of common sense. The fool is happy in his ignorance, and the enthusiast in his dream, the lover in his mistress, and the coxcomb in himself; but what is to become of the poor man who has too much discernment to be *deluded* into happiness, and is too wise to enjoy the blessings either of vanity or of folly? Were you, my friend, that person, possibly I might admire you, but I should pity you more.—— And yet, by your declaiming against all imaginary pleasures, I suppose you would have me think you such. But of what kind, pray, are these pleasures which you reserve
for

for yourself? Are they not imaginary?—You hunt, fiddle, sing and tell stories; and you are pleased with all these amusements.—But in what does the pleasure consist? Is it in the hound, or the fiddle, or the song, or the tale? Is it not in the ideas you affix to those objects? And, if so—Is it not imaginary? Ask the sober Citizen, whose chief pleasure is, at stated times, to rectify his shop and settle his books, his opinion of your amusements—He will tell you that his own are fifty per cent more rational. Ask a Methodist, or a Quaker—He will call your hunting an unrighteous work, your fiddle a vain piece of wood, your songs the songs of *Belial*, and your stories the workings of the old *Adam*. What is the reason of this, but that your ideas of these things differ from those of the Citizen, the Methodist, and the Quaker? The pleasures, therefore, which
they

they give you are merely ideal, and so are all that we enjoy.

LAUGH no more then at me, nor at my imaginary commerce with the muses. You should rather rejoice with me that, when you and the rest of my friends are weary of me, I can have recourse to these airy beings for intellectual delight. We cannot always enjoy the conversation of those we love : There are many hours when the mind must retire into itself, and refer to its own treasures for support. It is necessary therefore, to form mental as well as social connections ; and as the first are the least liable to be broken, they are better worth our cultivation than the last.

THINK not, however, that I set an inferior value on the intercourse of friendship, nor suppose that I prefer the society of the muses

to the company of my friend. If you rallied me on their acquaintance with a view to break it off, I can instruct you how to put your scheme in execution—Let me see you, and I will turn them out of doors.

LET.

LETTER XXXII.

WHEN poor *Dryden* turned papist, his pious confessor made him walk ten miles with pease in his shoes, for writing the *Religio Laici*; were I your confessor, I would punish you for not writing at all. You should be obliged to come from W—— to H——, without the assistance of *Crop*, the only horse in the parish you dare mount, and to exclude wheels would be unnecessary; for Sir J——s himself durst not drive down *Cotter*. Your not *answering* my letter is a crime of the first magnitude, and such as no good man was ever guilty of. Will you pretend business as an excuse? that will not do, unless you can make it appear, that you have

more business upon your hands than ever *Cæsar* had. *Cæsar* was at the same time a general, an emperor, and an author; and yet you find *that he answered* the ambassadors, even while he was dictating to his secretary. No person of character ever did as you have done. You are a worse friend than any of Job's *threes*, who, bad as they were, never failed to answer. Nay, the very inanimate creation reproaches you. Trees, rocks, woods, hills, and gin-shops have given answers. Witness *Pope*.

Thou shalt each ale-house, thou each gill-house
mourn,

And *answering* gin-shops sorer sighs return.

Witness Sir *William Temple*.

—————We sing not to the deaf;
An *answer* comes from every trembling leaf.

This

This fault of yours is become even a proverbial reproach; so that when any thing unpromising or worthless is mentioned, it is a common expression, that such a thing will never *answer*.

LETTER XXXIII.

I AM not at all surprized, to hear you express so much pleasure at the successful growth of C—— Wood. It was your own hand that planted it, and nature to induce us to useful labours has wisely annexed a peculiar pleasure to our success: So when *Cyrus* shewed his magnificent palace and gardens to *Solon*, he desired him to attend more particularly to a stately grove, which bounded one part of the prospect. That grove, said the prince, gives me more delight than all the other ornaments of my situation, because I reared it myself. But the delight with which you look upon those flourishing trees does not, I suppose, altogether arise from your having planted them yourself. They form

form a kind of epoch in your life, and when you look back to their plantation, you think of many scenes of early enjoyment, the remembrance of which may still be pleasing. They may also have a moral use, and by marking the progress of time, remind you that you have advanced so much farther on the race of life. This is a truth we are very inclinable to overlook ; for death, like an expiring lamp, seems always to recede as we approach.

BUT how far off, or how near the period of life may be, can be of little consequence to you, who have long since discharged its duties, and have now only to enjoy the remaining hours in hope and quiet. For this, retirement is, no doubt, the proper scene, where

Life may sleep, and learn to love her end ;

Where the mind may, at leisure, withdraw
 into itself, and the interests of immortality
 become its principal object; and where, by
 accustoming itself to abstracted speculation,
 it may, if I may so say, learn the art of
 existing when the body is no longer any part
 of its care. Agreeable to these sentiments
 are the following beautiful verses which I
 remember, though I know not where I first
 met with them :

O felix Studii, qui non ingloria ruris

Quia tutus agit ; procul ambitione metuque !

Qui recolens quicquid dignum est sapiente bo-
 noque,

————— æternæ meditatur feræ vitæ,

Gaudia despiciens moritura —————

Had Mr. Cowley known these verses, he
 would have inserted them in his Essay on Re-
 tirement, and probably would have translated
 them in some such lines as these :

Happy

Happy the man who far from Fear's alarm,
 Quietly lives on his own little farm ;
 Who thinks and acts in all things as he shou'd,
 And studies only to be wise and good ;
 Whose thoughts mount upward to their native
 skies,
 And scorn the bliss, that only smiles and dies.

LET.

LETTER XXXIV.

YOU could not have greater pleasure in the vigorous vegetation of your favourite grove, than I have had in the cultivation of a poetical genius; for I have lately received the most flattering proofs of my success, in an Elegy which my young Poet wrote on the death of a friend, and fellow collegian. As you are always pleased with the efforts of a lively fancy, you will not be dissatisfied with the following stanzas taken from the Elegy I speak of.

——— Death with brow severe,
 Deaf to the moving eloquence of woe,
 Gloomily glad beholds a mother's tear,
 And strikes with sarer aim the ruthless blow.

Oh ! had that hand withheld its hostile rage
 From the dear object of a parent's prayer,
 His filial love had cheer'd her widow'd age,
 And broke the speeding darts of Time and
 Care!

Where now are fled those scenes of social ease,
 By fancy form'd, remote from vulgar strife ?
 Of smiling love, and calm domestic peace,
 That scatter sunshine on the stream of life ?

Where are the joys by flattering hope supplied,
 Dear, distant dreams of yet unknown delight ;
 When health flow'd vigorous in the purple tide,
 And fancy painted every prospect bright ?

O Death ! last limit of our vain desires !
 What awful truths thy silent scenes display !
 By thy pale lamp the star of hope expires,
 And fancy closes her mechanic day.

I felt more sensibly this pleasure, as I had
 myself the happiness of communicating some
 satisfaction of the same kind to a worthy
 clergy-

clergyman, whom I call my poetical father.
But the offering, as you will see, was not
worthy of the subject.

LAMB, could the muse that boasts thy forming
care

Unfold the grateful feelings of my heart,
Her hand for thee should many a wreath prepare,
And cull the choicest flowers with studious art.

For mark'd by thee was each imperfect ray
That haply wander'd o'er my infant mind;
The dawn of genius brighten'd into day,
As thy skill open'd, as thy lore refin'd.

Each uncouth lay that falter'd from my tongue,
At eve or morn from EDEN'S murmurs caught;
Whate'er I painted, and whate'er I sung,
Though rude the strain, though artless was
the draught,

You

You wisely prais'd, and fed the sacred fire,
That warms the breast with love of honest
fame ;

You swell'd to nobler heights my infant lyre,
Rais'd the low thought, and check'd th' ex-
uberant flame.

O, could the muse in future times obtain
One humble garland from th' *Aonian* tree!
With joy I'd bind thy favour'd brows again,
With joy I'd form a fairer wreath for thee.

L E T-

L E T T E R X X X V .

IS it really true that Nature has rendered variety necessary to enjoyment? There are undoubtedly some points to which it would be dangerous to extend the concession; but where we may own it without any improper consequences, I think we might as well give the rein to truth, and freely acknowledge it.

It cannot, surely it ought not, to be altogether imputed to the weakness of man, that he is fond of change.—In those circumstances where constancy is not a virtue, nor the breach of it a crime, why should the pursuit of variety be deemed a weakness?

WE find, by experience, that those scenes, or objects, which have been often enjoyed,
 become

become insipid ; and if changing the scene, or varying the object, will throw any thing into the scale of enjoyment, let it, in the name of right philosophy, take place ; where-ever, I repeat it, constancy is not a virtue.

YET there is a pride which frequently confines a man to what yields him no pleasure ; nay, sometimes, to what makes him miserable.—He will not change his circumstances, or situation, because then he must appear to have changed his opinion ; and he will not change his opinion, because that would be a proof against his infallibility.

WELL deserved are the miseries of false pride ; and, indeed, I have known them in the last-mentioned instance severely felt.—To continue obstinately in the wrong with regard to objects of reason, or argument, may be the effect of natural or acquired prejudices,

judices, but to continue obstinately unhappy for fear of the imputation of error, is to incur the last degree of folly, to avoid being thought foolish.

BESIDES, the general charge of weakness on the pursuit of variety, or a frequent inclination to change, is, generally, as ill-founded. It is very seldom that a man can determine from speculation, what will most effectually contribute to his own happiness. —Our judgments in that case are usually partial, and engaged in the interest of some prevailing passion ; nay, they are many times misled by a temporary inclination, which is no constituent part of our natural temper, and vanishes with the casual objects that excited it. Thus we find ourselves disappointed in our pursuits, and, of consequence, we engage in new ones.—To charge us with folly, or weakness for this, is nothing more
 4 than

than to charge human nature with imperfection. Indeed, the end of wisdom is the attainment of happiness, and if we miss her in one path, we have a right, upon the justest and the wisest principles, to pursue her in another.—There may be many who have found her, without occasion or inclination to vary their pursuit; such, though more fortunate, have been, perhaps, no wiser than the friend you mention; for chance often directs more happily than human sagacity.

LETTER XXXVI.

IT has been commonly observed, that none can enjoy the country so much as those who are sometimes accustomed to live in London. I was once unwilling to believe this, from a conclusion that no man could taste the pleasures of it in a more exquisite degree than I did myself;—but I find, by experience, that I was mistaken.—A long residence in town has endeared the country to me beyond expression.—I find new beauties in every hill, valley, and hedge-row; I discover herbs and flowers to which, when I lived amongst them, I was an entire stranger; and I observe a distinguished and peculiar melody in the notes of those very birds which, whilst in their neighbourhood,

bourhood, I had heard a thousand times without observing at all.

THIS romantic country delights me much, and is not unlike a scene in Theocritus, of a plain lying between the mountains and the sea of Sicily.—It is a well-cultivated vale, stretching to the sea on the south, and on the north defended by a chain of high hills, from which you easily look over the channel upon the coast of France. Upon one of these hills are the vestiges of an old Roman, or British camp; but, from the shape of the circumvallations, I am inclined to think it was the former. The air of the mountains is delightfully pure and serene; and I have been more exhilarated with riding upon their tops than I could have been with the warmest cordial.

IN one of my morning excursions, I was delighted with the appearance of a beautiful

grove of poplars upon the declivity of a hill,
at the foot of which was a small but very
clear stream. In wandering up and down the
grove, I discovered, with no small surprize,
the following lines written with a pencil on
one of the poplars :

Once to this beauteous poplar-grove,
A wandring shepherd found his way ;
And tun'd his pensive lay to love,
For love inspir'd his pensive lay ;
Yet nought had Damon to complain
Of faithless vows, or proud disdain,
Or unrewarded care ;
His nymph was tender, faithful, kind,
The truest heart, the gentlest mind,
But ah ! she was not there.

On another tree, in the same grove, I found
the following stanza :

Ye shepherds that scorn to complain,
Or soften your music to woe,
May tell me, my sorrows are vain,
But can ye forbid them to flow ?

On the same tree, at a little distance, were these lines :

A green tree waves its old arms near my door,
For many an age a stream has murmur'd by;
I'm rich in fancy, tho' in fortune poor,
Content I live, and careless I shall die.

These inscriptions, so accidentally discovered,
I thought curious ; but my enquiries after
the poet have hitherto been in vain.

L E T T E R XXXVII.

WE part with praise as with every thing else that is valuable, freely, when we have an equivalent for it, when we have not, with indifference, or reluctance.

UPON this principle it is, that, in the imitative arts; the expression of human sentiments has a stronger and more lasting effect than the description of natural objects.—We are pleased with just representations of nature in her visible works; we are amused with the comparison, and the artist draws from us a transient approbation, which we afford him not altogether unwillingly, because he gives us an opportunity of flattering ourselves upon our skill in comparing. We are pleased with the imitation, or the description, not because the poet, or the painter, have rendered
it

it just or striking, but because we are able to discover the resemblance.

BUT faint is the praise we bestow on those objects which exercise only the judgment.— That poet, or that painter, alone can gain the heart, who addresses himself to its feelings. We are delighted, we are charmed with a similarity of sentiments. We love society in what we feel. We are glad to find so many images of ourselves in the minds of others, and we always respect them as such.

YET the particular and prevailing cause why we are delighted with these representations of the inward oeconomy, is the peculiar relation they bear to our private interests.—When we are presented with the images of what we felt, we consider the picture in some measure as drawn from ourselves, and

we praise the painter, not for his happy descriptions of human nature, but because he has described us in particular.

HENCE it is, that, in exhibiting the low and guilty passions, an artist never meets with such general, or sincere admiration, as in describing the nobler and more liberal sensations. We can give our approbation to just pictures of avarice, ill-nature, and envy; but these do not affect our own particular sentiments.—We are convinced that we are neither avaricious, envious, or ill-natured.—The pictures may be well executed; they may obtain our approbation; but they do not carry away our hearts.

BUT let the painter exert his powers upon the best and noblest passions of human nature,—let him represent in life and action those sentiments which do honour to our reason and

our virtue,—let him draw lively pictures of generosity, compassion, natural affection, &c. While we see human nature ennobled we find ourselves happy, and though we may not possess the sentiments described, in their utmost perfection, we shall flatter ourselves, at least, that we do, and still conclude that the picture bears no very distant resemblance.

A PAINTER who should thus employ his art, would be not only most secure of praise, but might likewise have a claim to the title and the merit of a moralist.

LET-

L E T T E R XXXVIII.

ALL that in a former letter I have said on the subject of painting is equally applicable to poetry ; and, whatever their genius may be, both the poet and the painter will principally owe their success to the happy choice of their subjects.

It would be in vain for a painter of the most distinguished powers to hope for any lasting reputation, or any cordial praise, should he content himself merely with drawing fruits or flowers. Let his execution be ever so admirable, it will obtain no more than a transient approbation. It is pretty, we own, to see those objects so executed as to deceive the very animal creation, but it makes no further impression upon us, and is

scarce

scarce longer remembered than seen.—Yet, let a picture, infinitely inferior in merit, but upon the subject of those passions that create the miseries or the happiness of our lives,—let such a picture be brought before us, and we are immediately interested. The mind is busy in the review of its own sentiments, and the heart is appealed to by its proper feelings.

IN poetical painting the case is just the same.—No poet can live upon the description of external objects: They pass through the imagination for a moment, and are gone; and though we have some descriptive poems which we still read with pleasure, they are, probably, indebted in a great measure, for their preservation, to the pathos and sentiment occasionally intermixed with them.

OF this kind is the beautiful Elegy written in a Country Church-yard ; for, though it may be called a descriptive poem, it enters so pathetically into the native feelings of the heart, that it must be read and admired for ever.

THERE is, perhaps, no poem in any modern language, that will afford more striking instances in favour of the observations I have already made, than the *Gierusalemme Liberata*. Taffo, you know, paints in the highest colours, but how uninteresting are his most animated scenes till the characters are introduced, and the business of the heart goes forward. We no longer remember the prodigies of Armidas Gardens, when the fate of Rinaldo engages our attention.

How soon, in reading the story of Phaeton, do we forget Ovid's magnificent description

scription of the palace of the Sun!—We make our way through the blaze of glory to find the poor youth who is about to fall a sacrifice to his ambition ; and all the pompous display of the celestial heights, through which he is to pass, affects us no otherwise, than as it adds to the tremendous circumstances of his fall. The fierceness and fiery dispositions of the horses of the sun have some effect upon us, because we tremble for the charioteer ; but the splendor of the chariot is unaffecting, because it is of no consequence to his interest. When we come to those exquisite lines——

*Pignora certa petis? Do pignora certa timendo,
Et patrio pater esse metu probor.*

All that has passed before is perfectly indifferent ; the poet there shews his power, and carries away the heart.

LET-

LETTER XXXIX.

WO be to the man who is able to purchase every thing but his own approbation! What splendor! what magnificence! what natural and artificial beauty about the house we lately visited! How palatial was that *suite* of rooms! what grandeur in the saloon! those *figures* in *alto relieve* how admirably executed!——The pictures too, if not excellent, collected at an immense expence, and on that account at least entitled to an ideal value.—But the Master!—the poor Master, was, certainly, the most deplorable figure:—The gloom of habitual discontent sat on every feature, and gave its colour to every action and sentiment.

WHEN

WHEN I beheld so much misery amidst so many reputed means of happiness, it excited, in some degree, my curiosity, and I was desirous to learn the history of the man.

IT is never difficult to obtain the minutest information concerning a worthless character. The circumstances of a vicious conduct are recorded with a degree of industry, that, if the end were merely to expose and discountenance vice, would do honour to those who are at such pains to collect them.

FOR my own part, I had neither this nor any worse motive for my enquiries, the result of which was as follows :

SIR ——— was born to an estate of 7000 *l. per Ann.* He had the misfortune at the same time to have fools for his parents. From the age of five to fifteen he had private
tutors.

tutors under him.—From fifteen to eighteen he drove a phaeton between London and Oxford, and at that age he went to one of the inns of court, under pretence of learning to defend his property, but in effect to learn every thing that was truly despicable, or disgraceful. He had naturally a weak understanding, but was at the same time selfish, a disposition which was abundantly cherished and encouraged by unlimited indulgence.—In consequence of this, his early years passed between meanness and licentiousness, both proceeding from the same principle, and the former always subservient to the latter.—He was ever incapable of the sentiments of love; but was, nevertheless, married at an early time of life to a lady of the most amiable sensibility, and the most respectable accomplishments. His brutality soon broke her heart, and he sought another match of equal advantage in point of fortune. Happily this
time

time he married a woman who had neither virtue nor delicacy.—In less than a week they parted; but, fortunately, no divorce has taken place, and he is, therefore, incapable of committing any other matrimonial murder.—At present, without any inherent or acquired principles of taste, he pretends to skill in the works of art, with which he is sometimes honestly supplied, though at others he becomes the dupe of picture-mongers, &c. &c. But, without love, without friendship, without the capacity of intellectual entertainment, without generosity to procure esteem or attention, with an emaciated body and a barren mind, *no wonder he should be the wretch he appears.*

L E T T E R XL.

Quanto il mondo hà di vago e di gentili,
Opraé d' Amore.———.

HOW much are we indebted to nature for the principles of our best virtues! To her we owe, not only the pleasure we derive from delightful sensations, but even the happiness which flows from the reflection of moral excellence.— Those innocent enjoyments she offers to our senses have an influence on the mind; and the more happy we are in the indulgence of such pleasures, the more virtuous we become of course.

THE truth of this will appear in nothing more evidently than in the passion of love. *Guarini*, you see, makes it the source of all the graces; and I will venture at this mo-

ment

ment to conclude that your heart bears testimony to the propriety of his observation.—Have you not remarked, after the *addoucissement* of the tender hour, how the whole soul is expanded, and what new influences of benevolence pour upon the heart? All then is the large and liberal wish for universal happiness.—LOVE, the parent of all creatures, seems to unite her children in the same chain of affection; and when she gives her offspring their portion of happiness, bids them respectively remember their brethren.

It is somewhere or other remarked of a noted beggar, that he never saw a lover with his mistress without applying for relief, and that he was hardly ever unsuccessful in his application. But the writer, who has at the same time assigned the reason for it, perhaps, knew not so much of love as the beggar himself; for he only observes, that they would

relieve him to be free from his importunity.—I am of opinion that the mendicant was a better philosopher than the author, and knew very well that the heart of a lover would be most easily open to charity.

ONE of the first ministers of Amurath the Third was distinguished for his knowledge of the human heart, and was, indeed, no less a philosopher than a politician.—When he had any thing to propose to his master in favour of his subjects, which, he supposed, might create a difficulty, he always took the opportunity of addressing him, when he came from the embraces of a favourite mistress.

THINK, my cautious friend, no longer of the inconveniences, but turn your eyes upon the pleasures of love.—If it will make you happy, it is your wisdom to embrace it; if it will make you virtuous, it is your duty.

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